

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 674

Designating September 22, 2008, as “National Falls Prevention Awareness Day” to raise awareness and encourage the prevention of falls among older adults.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 22 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 17), 2008

Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. BURR, and Mr. HATCH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Designating September 22, 2008, as “National Falls Prevention Awareness Day” to raise awareness and encourage the prevention of falls among older adults.

Whereas older adults value their independence and a fall can significantly limit their ability to remain self-sufficient;

Whereas falls are the leading cause of death from unintentional injuries among older adults in the United States;

Whereas older adults are by far the population at greatest risk for falling unintentionally, with more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of all people 65 years or older falling each year;

Whereas older adults who fall once are 2 to 3 times more likely than adults who have not fallen to fall again;

Whereas, in 2000, the Bureau of the Census reported that more than 34,800,000 adults older than the age of 65 live in the United States, and that number is expected to grow to almost 55,000,000 by 2020;

Whereas 20 to 30 percent of older adults who fall suffer moderate to severe injuries, such as bruising, hip fractures, and head traumas;

Whereas, in 2005, falls resulted in nearly 1,800,000 older adults being treated in emergency departments and more than 433,000 older adults being hospitalized;

Whereas, in 2005, nearly 16,000 people aged 65 and older died from injuries related to unintentional falls;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that the mortality rate from falls among older adults increased 45 percent between 2000 and 2004;

Whereas the total in direct costs associated with both fatal and non-fatal falls is more than \$19,000,000,000 annually for hospitalization, emergency department visits, and outpatient care;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that if the rate of increase in falls is not stemmed, annual direct treatment costs will reach \$43,800,000,000 by 2020, with an annual cost under the Medicare program of \$32,400,000,000;

Whereas evidence-based programs show promise in reducing falls and facilitating cost-effective interventions, such as comprehensive clinical assessments, exercise programs to improve balance and health, management of medications, correction of vision, and reduction of home hazards;

Whereas, on April 23, 2008, the Safety of Seniors Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–202) was enacted, amending the

Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280b et seq.) to create a national education campaign aimed at older adults, their families, and healthcare providers, and injury prevention programs that focus on the reduction and prevention of falls among older adults; and

Whereas the Falls Free Coalition Advocacy Work Group, its numerous supporting organizations and all other supportive organizations, should be commended for their efforts to raise awareness and to promote greater understanding, research, and pilot programs to prevent falls among older adults: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates September 22, 2008, as “Na-
3 tional Falls Prevention Awareness Day”;

4 (2) commends the National Falls Free Coalition
5 and all other supportive organizations for their ef-
6 forts to promote awareness about preventing and re-
7 ducing falls among older people in the United
8 States;

9 (3) encourages the private sector, the public
10 health community, healthcare providers, advocacy
11 organizations, and Federal, State, and local govern-
12 ments to work together to increase education and
13 awareness about the prevention of falls; and

14 (4) urges national and community organiza-
15 tions, businesses, individuals, and the media to use
16 National Falls Prevention Awareness Day to pro-
17 mote awareness of this important public health prob-

- 1 lem in an effort to reduce the incidence of falls
- 2 among older people in the United States.

